

12 September 1967

Dr. H. Orin Halvorson  
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University of Minnesota  
St. Paul, Minnesota 55101

Dear Dr. Halvorson:

Speaking as a private citizen, I was greatly disappointed by the decision of the Central Committee to delete the section on biology and national defense. I am sure all of us on the panel recognized at the outset that many of the issues involving the life sciences and national defense are politically sensitive and that there are many points of view within the scientific community, particularly with respect to BW and related areas. I have no quarrel with those who would disagree with the viewpoint of the panel, but I am discouraged by the fact that life scientists, unlike the physical scientists, are apparently unwilling to debate these issues.

In rereading the letter which I received from Dr. Handler dated September 1966, I particularly note the last paragraph on page 2 which reads as follows:

"As you will understand, this is a large undertaking of extreme importance. The reception by government of the reports which have already been issued is almost frightening in the sense that they have been accepted as the best basis for national planning available. They have been reviewed by appropriate government bodies and the projections which they offered have been incorporated into the long-range planning of each major Federal agency which relates to such activities. We are aware that the relevant Federal agencies in this instance expect to do

precisely the same. It is therefore most important that we make our case as strongly as we can and that our projections be as precise as circumstances permit. In toto, we will be writing the blueprint for the next ten years or so of biological and medical research and setting the stage for the Federal contribution to this effort."

It is a fact that Federal support to the life sciences is increasing at a greater rate than in the physical sciences. Abrogation of responsibility to provide guidance by senior, knowledgeable scientists will inevitably lead to the only alternative available, namely, programmed decision making by those with little or no background in the life sciences.

I wish to commend you and Dr. Handler for taking the position which you did during the course of the meetings in spite of their unfortunate outcome.

Yours truly,

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